

The Ash Breeze

Journal of the Traditional Small Craft Association

DREAMING OF ISLANDS

IN THIS ISSUE

John Gardner Grant Annual Report

**Call for National Council
Nominations**

Building Eastport Prams



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The Traditional Small Craft Association, Inc., is a nonprofit, tax-exempt educational organization that works to preserve and continue the living traditions, skills, lore, and legends surrounding working and pleasure watercraft with origins that predate the marine gasoline engine. We encourage the design, construction, and use of these boats, and we embrace contemporary variants and adaptations of traditional designs.

TSCA is an enjoyable yet practical link among users, designers, builders, restorers, historians, government, and maritime institutions.

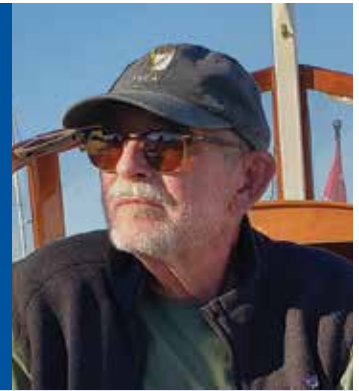
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TAB Layout Design: Karen Bowen

Cover: *Broadway on the San Joaquin*. Photo by Simon Lewandowski. Photo courtesy Mike Higgins and Bob Hall. To learn more, read "TSCA Sacramento 25th Annual Gunkhole" from the Winter 2023 issue.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael Jones



We have lost one of our founding members, Sid Whelan. Sid was instrumental in forming both the TSCA and the John Gardner Grants, an active Volunteer at Mystic Seaport Museum Boathouse for years. As a supportive member of the John Gardner TSCA Chapter, he started a fund to support training youth in boatbuilding and small craft use. His leadership and passion for the TSCA serves as an example for us all, and a reminder of what we owe those who have built this organization. Sid will be sorely missed.

As we look forward to spring weather, it is also the time to plan for the future. Three council members will be stepping down from their council member positions, and we will need nominations to fill those positions. Our bylaws limit each council member to three years of service. This provision is to keep a broad participation from our membership and a fresh perspective for the future of our organization. We encourage you to volunteer for what will be a rewarding experience.

The Council meets the third Wednesday of each month by Zoom and is always open to anyone who wishes to join us. At the risk of repeating myself in each of these messages, I want to thank all of the current council members and especially John Weiss, who maintains our membership records and communications, and Andy Wolfe and the staff of Mariner Media for their work producing *The Ash Breeze*.

We also need to thank our new Benefactors: Katherine & David Cockey and Tina & Roger Allen for their generosity and longtime support of the TSCA.

On a personal note:

When we are lucky, the stars align and good things happen. Finding a John Gardner built Chamberlain Gunning Dory on Florida's "Nature Coast" in good condition is something close to a miracle. Details of the dory are in John's books: *The Dory Book* and *Building Classic Small Craft*. The dory was built in 1966 and had been stored and protected by Brad Simoneaux for many years. After his recent passing his family made sure the boat was passed to someone who valued the boat as much as he had, and I was the lucky one. Watch for a more detailed story in a future *Ash Breeze*.

Fair Winds,
Michael Jones
President TSCA



I DREAM OF ISLANDS



By Steve Earley

Exotic. What makes sailing to an island in an open boat so exotic? Is it the close connection I find with wind and waves as I sail *Spartina*, my John Welsford-designed Pathfinder? Is it the sense of discovery? Is it the challenge of tides, weather, and distance that make sailing to an island an adventure worth savoring? If you ask me, it is all of the above.

Islands line the paths of my cruising grounds. They come in all shapes and sizes. Some islands are tall, granite and majestic, seemingly erupting from the water. Others are so low to the horizon that they hide, revealing themselves only when you are nearly on top of them. Some islands are covered in marsh grasses, others lined by white sand that will blind you on a sunny day. And there are islands, I have found, that will disappear in a moment's time.

As I think about this year's cruises, I think about islands along the way. In winter maybe head south to the Sea Islands off Georgia. Spring I hope to sail the Sounds inside the barrier islands of North Carolina. Summer I could escape to the countless rocky islands of Maine. And fall will call me back



Top: *Spartina sailing on Skull Creek, Hilton Head.*
Right: *Sailing Spartina into Skull Creek, Hilton Head Island, SC. Photographs by Webb Chiles.*



home to the marshy islands of Chesapeake Bay. I flip through my logbook, remember past cruises. And I dream of islands.

MARCH 2023

St. Simons Island is a dark shape backed by the orange glow of dawn. I raise *Spartina's* sails as the sun crests the island. With a steady west wind and a helping tide, we make 5.0 knots as the Mackay River heads south.

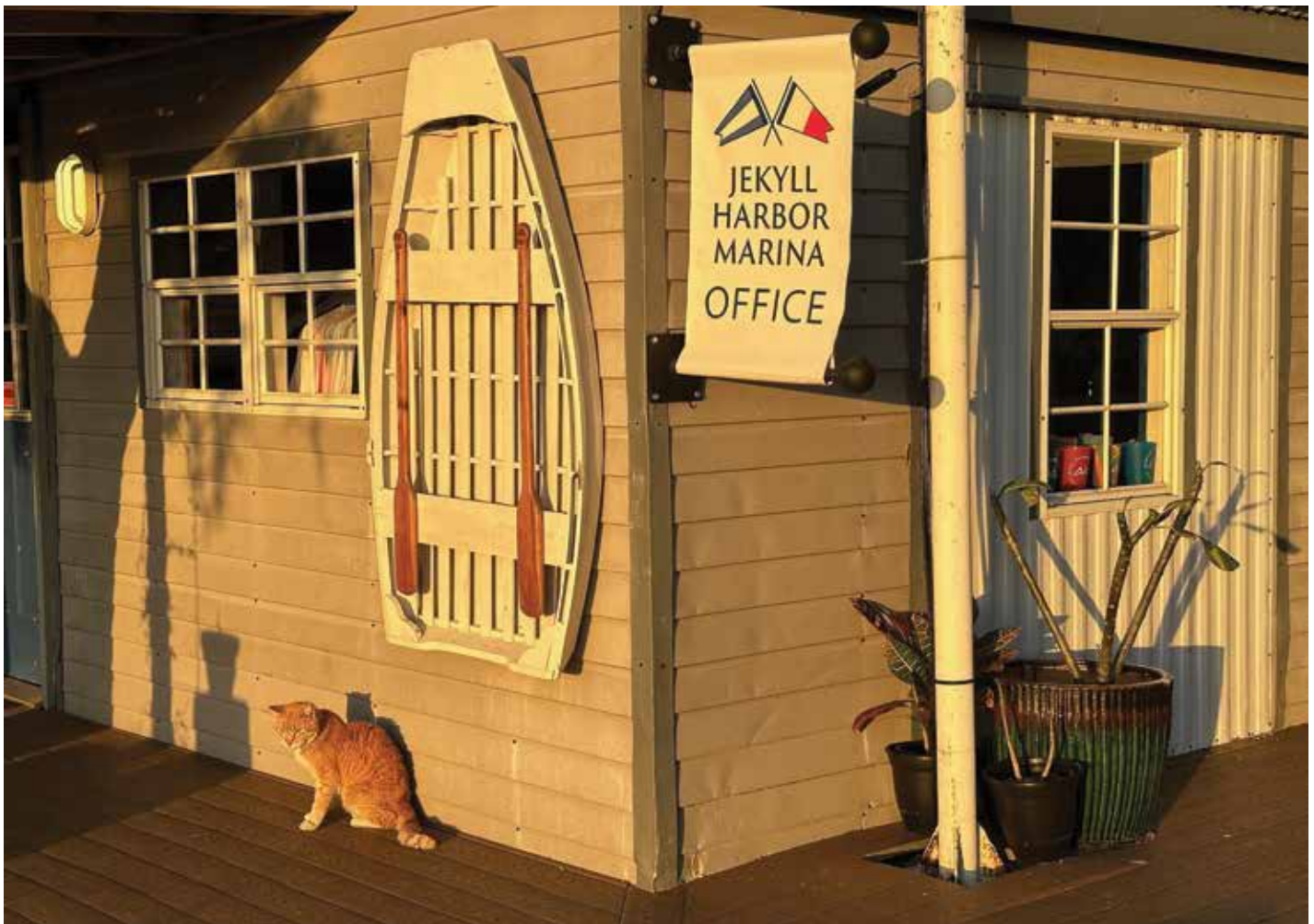
The wind gets gusty, so I round up to tuck in a reef. We make several tacks as the river turns west into the wind, then fall off for an easy run south. At 8:45 we reach Manhead Sound. The Mackay River Bridge is just a mile to the south, and we pass beneath as the helping ebb tide ends.

The west wind is perfect sailing on St. Simons Sound, making 3.3 knots with the wind just aft of beam. Approaching red marker "250" I can feel *Spartina* working against the incoming tide. We round the shoals in the middle of the

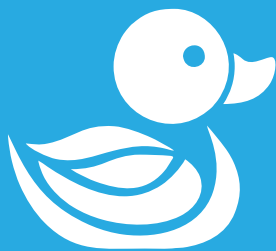


Below: Jekyll Harbor Marina office.

Right: Spartina sailing near St. Simons Island. Photo by James and Phran Simmermon, S/V PHLYER.

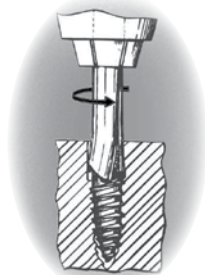


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Sound; I tighten up the sheets and turn towards Jekyll Creek. Now making 6.2 knots with a helping tide.

At 10:50 with Jekyll Island to port, I can pick out the entrance markers to the creek. The flood tide fills the creek; it is wide and full of water. Easy sailing on a beam reach. Making 5.0 knots tracing the west shore of Jekyll Island.

Docked at Jekyll Island Marina at noon, I go to the office to pay for a slip. As I tell the young woman my boat's name—*Spartina*—she tells me her fisherman father says, "It's the spartina that make the shrimp sweet." I smile for the rest of the day thinking about that.

MAY 2021

Tiny Ocracoke Island sits hard on the edge of the Atlantic, part of a chain of barrier islands that separate Pamlico Sound from the ocean. Sails up before dawn on East Bluff Bay; Ocracoke awaits 18 miles to the southeast.

The mainsail gaff is peaked high, sheets hauled taut, we slip out of the bay with a steady west-southwest wind. Clear skies and making 5.8 knots with wind on the beam, sails tinted orange by the rising sun.

Ahead the sun glares on the water with the silhouette of a ferry moving east to west. So far on the cruise I've been sailing on rich brown water coming from the swamps and marshes. Now we're sailing blue-green water with white spray leaping to port.

I could not have asked for a better day. Wind on the beam, *Spartina* bounds across the water at 5.5 to 6 knots. At Bluff Shoal there is a single marker, nothing else in sight but water. I glance at the chart to check our position. When I look up, I am surprised by the shape of Ocracoke's water tower ahead. Soon the shape of the island's lighthouse comes into view.

I follow the entrance channel, then jibe just north of Springer's Point. Wing and wing we slip between the jetties into Silver Lake. Docked near the community store, a shopkeeper named Rob invites me up to his porch to talk in the shade. He gives me the keys to his golf cart, tells me how I can get to his house if I need a shower. Island people are like that.

Evening comes with hints of pink and purple in the clouds. The lighthouse turns orange from the setting sun, the beacon shines bright. *Spartina* rides quietly an anchor in the harbor.

Below: *Spartina* crossing Pamlico Sound to Ocracoke.

Right Top: *Spartina* drying off at Bar Harbor.

Right Bottom: Sailing into Silver Lake, Ocracoke Island, North Carolina Outer Banks.





AUGUST 2023

Blue skies, not much wind. A summer morning in Maine, and we're struggling to make our way south on Frenchman Bay. A little wind out of the south fills in, and then more. Making 4.6 just before noon. The Porcupine Islands are spread out ahead of us. Left to right are Long Porcupine Island, Burnt Porcupine Island, and Sheep Porcupine Island.

We're sailing against a strong flood tide; the water bunches up around the islands and flows through as a strong opposing current. The wind builds, and I struggle to make headway in the chop. Lobster pot floats everywhere don't make tacking into the wind any easier.

I follow the channel between Sheep Porcupine and Burnt Porcupine Islands. Calmer water past the islands, and I congratulate myself on some good sailing. Then I see the fog bank. It charges at us with surprising speed. My plan of sailing south to the Cranberry Islands is gone. I fall off to the east as the fog overcomes us.

Wind, heavy mist, and rushing tide all coming out of the south. I round up, drop the main, now sailing under mizzen and jib. The chill surprises me; everything is cold and wet. We sail northeast off the rocky shore of Long Porcupine Island. And then the tall granite island disappears in the fog. Surrounded by grey mist, I navigate by GPS.

The fog chases up past Stave Island and obscures a possible anchorage at Flanders Bay. I turn northwest to clear skies inside of Calf Island, then duck back out onto Frenchman Bay with a handful of tacks past Preble and Dram Islands. One last run across Mt. Desert Narrows, and then we anchor in calm water behind Bean Island.

MAY 2018

I stand outside Ruke's Seafood Deck, the disheveled red building makes me wonder about my crab cake lunch. A woman walking by says, "It's closed; been gone for a couple of years now." I tell her how much I had enjoyed the crab cakes there, made by three kind ladies. The best on the Bay. "Yes," she says, "made with love."

It had been a blustery sail from the Honga River south to the village of Ewell on Smith Island. A "backdoor" cold front had arrived overnight bringing strong east winds. I sailed in the lee of the low, marshy islands that separate Tangier Sound from Chesapeake Bay—Bloodsworth, Adam, Holland, and South Marsh Islands. *Spartina* slides into the shallow channel just below Swan Island late morning. Perfect timing for lunch at Ruke's. Or so I thought.

I walk over to the Smith Island Cultural Center. Inside is Laura, who gives me a personal tour of the museum. She

Fog bank rolling over Stave Island in Maine.







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loans me her bike for a ride through the small village, tells me the road is a figure eight with the Methodist Church in the middle and I can't get too far lost. So it's off for a ride past the marshes and mounds of oyster shells, piles of crab pot floats, and well-used workboats.

Back at the museum I see the woman who had told me about Ruke's. She smiles and says, "I've brought something for you!" She hands me cardboard trays of food—chunks of roast beef, two thick slices of toast, a salad, slices of cantaloupe, and a piece of eight-layered cake. I hardly have time to thank her as she hops in the car to drive away. I ask her name. "Dory," she says, waving goodbye.

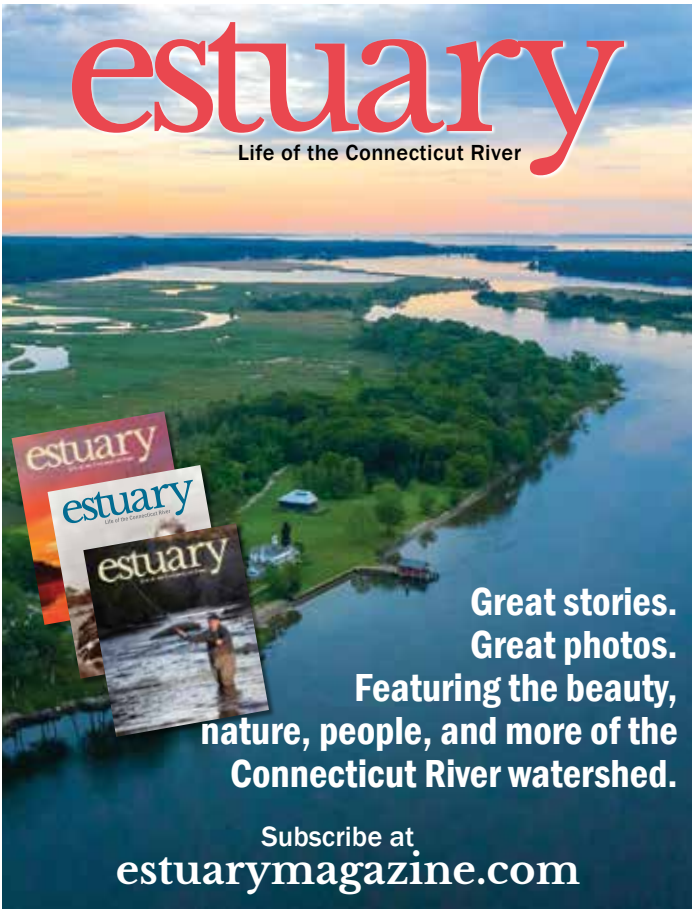
Evening, anchored in a marshy little cove, I enjoy my Smith Island cake. And I think about missing out on the crab cakes, finding kindness instead.

Who knows what time and chance will bring me this year? Four seasons and maybe four cruises, that sounds nice. For now, I will close my eyes, and dream of islands.



Below: Crab pot floats and bike, Ewell, Smith Island.
Right Top: Darlene the open deadrise in Smith Island.
Right Bottom: The closed Ruke's Seafood Deck, Ewell, Smith Island.





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THE WINDMILL: CLARKS MILLS LEAN MEAN SHARPIE

By Mike Jones

The phenomenal growth of the Optimist Pram, which has a maximum age limit of fifteen for the class, quickly led to the need for another design of affordable boats for the growing number of teenage sailors, sending Clark Mills back to the drawing board to create a follow-up design.

“They asked me to come over to the yacht club to give them a little bit of help in figuring out a good little boat for the graduating pram sailors. When a kid is fifteen, he is too big for the Pram, and they need to get him a bigger boat. The Snipe was a good \$100

more than they could afford for every little kid. They kept talking about a bigger pram and this and that and another thing. I told them that they did not want another pram. What they want is the leanest, meanest, go-to-hell sailboat that they could get. After they get out of those Prams they can sail anything. They are ready. Well, they thought about that. I think when you get into the bigger boat that you are going to find some adults that are going to be interested in that. So I went back to the shop and drew up a sharpie. It was a nice little sharpie. It sailed very well. But people

Windmill #1.



Top: Honey at McKay Creek.
Bottom: Windmill at Heritage Village 2023.



didn't understand sharpies like they used to. When I was a little bitty boy there were a lot of sharpies around. They worked them. So I went back to the shop, and I started studying a sharpie that I had built for a preacher that lived next door to me. It had a whole lot of dead rise in the bow, a real sharp-nosed boat that eased on back into a flat run. It sailed to beat the band. It was fast. They liked the way that the pram was a homemade boat. They figured out that I could get them something out for a lot less money than a Snipe."—Clark Mills

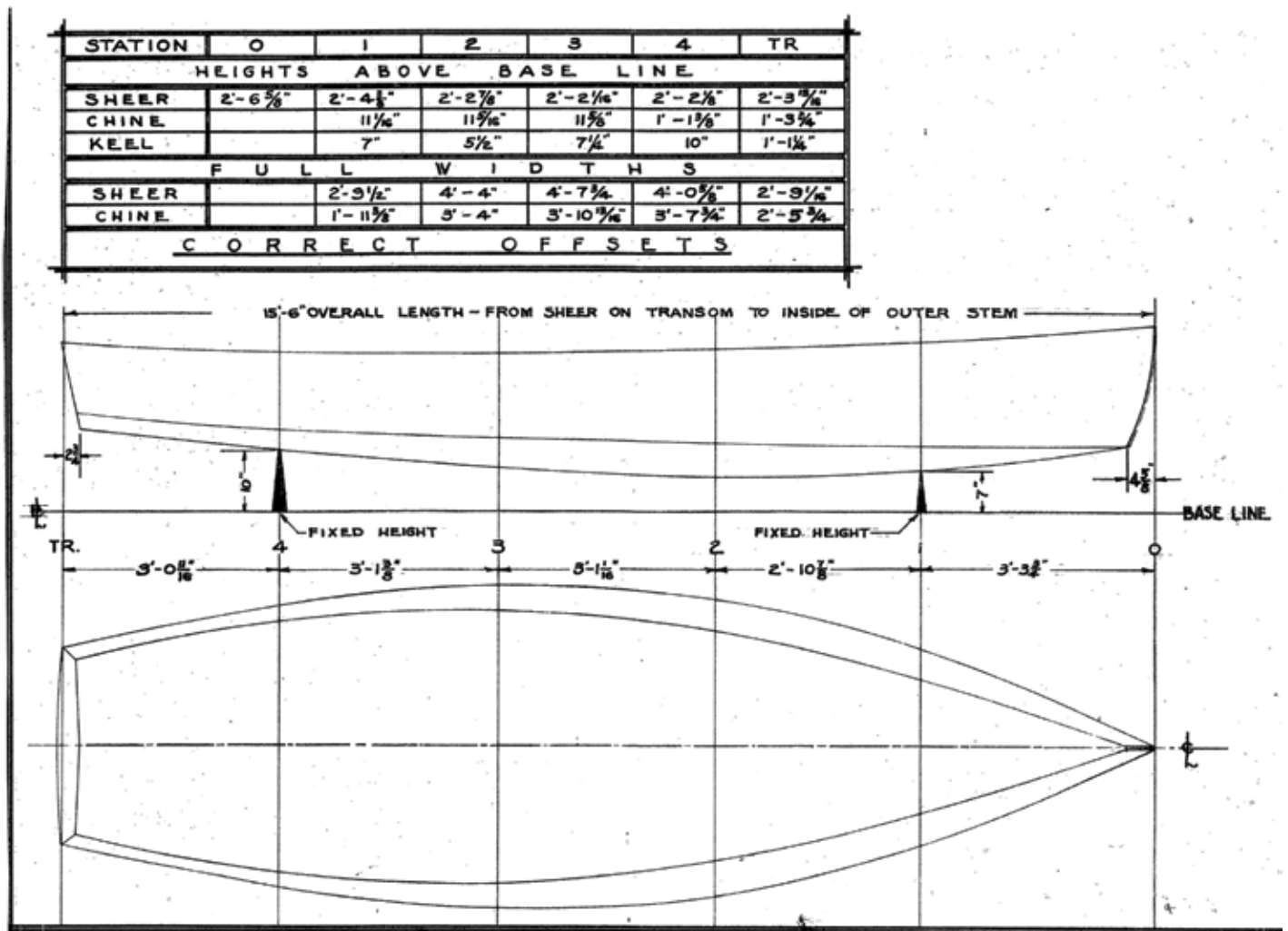
The fast sharpie design became the Windmill. Designed like the Optimist Pram for home construction, it is the essence of efficiency in time and material for construction as well as fast and fun. The sailing ability of the Windmill has been described in articles in *WoodenBoat* and *Classic Boat* (see links at the end of the article). What is less well known or described is the innovative construction design. The goal of the design was to make a boat that was economical to build in terms of time and material. To minimize waste, the Windmill is built using the three bulkheads as stations, saving time and material with no disposable building forms. The aft bulkhead supports the aft thwart, the next is at the forward end of the

daggerboard trunk, and the final is just forward of the mast. The transom, stem, bulkheads, and daggerboard trunk are positioned on the strong back, followed by the keelson, chine log, and sheer clamp being fastened in place. The 1/4" plywood planks were fit and nailed on with ring shank nails. For a builder, all the parts could be pre-cut and fit on a building jig for a highly efficient build, with minimal wasted material. In today's world the parts would be CNC cut for stitch and glue.

Changes to class rules now require air tanks to be built in under the side decks. Contemporary epoxy construction makes this an easy addition, making the boat self-rescuing. Plans and instructions are available on the Windmill Class Association's website: <http://windmillclass.myfleet.org/>.

The rig of the Windmill was also designed to help minimize the cost of being competitive in the class. The rules limit controls once sailing to the jib and main sheets, allowing for a pure sailing experience with the focus being on sail trim, and hull balance with daggerboard and crew placement. Owing to the light weight, simplicity, and quickness, the boat makes an excellent training vessel. The speed and liveliness also make it a boat that you do not outgrow. Many race in the class for

Windmill lines.



decades. The culture of the class is very family friendly with parent-child and husband-wife crew being common.

There is a connection between Windmills and Snipes that should be mentioned. The Snipe class was the predominate small racing class of the time, and Clark Mills was known nationally for building fast Snipes. Between 1950 and 1965 seven national championships were won in Mills-built Snipes. The Snipe was designed by William F. Crosby in 1931 as part of *The Rudder* magazine's "How to Build" series for home builders (*The Rudder* articles are available online at <https://www.snipe.org/tag/rudder-magazine/>). The West Coast Racing Association of Florida asked Crosby to design a sailboat that could be trailered to regattas. The concept and the design were perfect for the time. Within a decade the Snipe was well on its way to being the most popular racing one-design class and remaining so for most of the century.

The Windmill and the Snipe are both v-bottom sharpies and good examples of adapting traditional hull designs to recreational use.

	Snipe	Windmill
LOA	15'6"	15'6"
Beam	5'	4'9"
sail area sq ft	116	119
weight-pounds	425	200

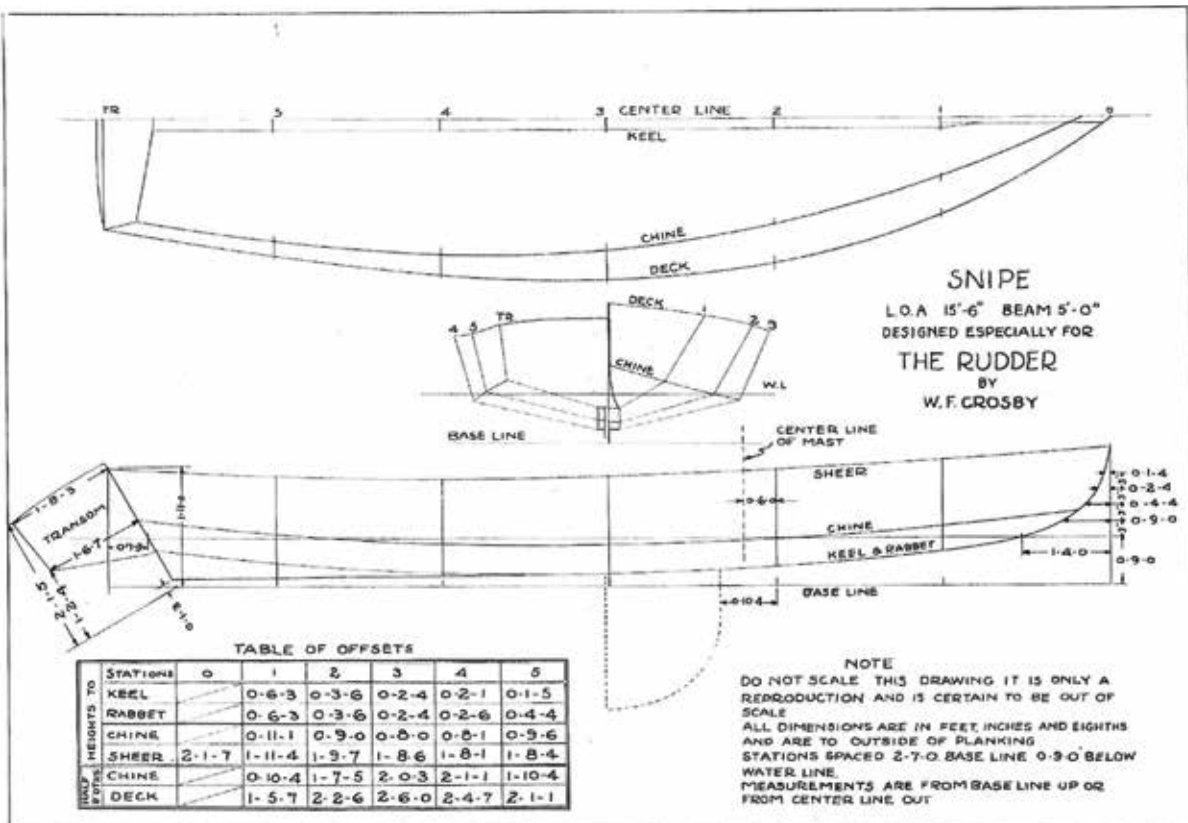
The Snipe was traditionally carvel planked with cedar while the Windmill designed a quarter century later when quality marine plywood was available, took advantage of the new material. This reduced the weight from approximately 425 pounds to 200 pounds, with cost savings being proportional.

Both the Snipe and the Windmill are still active racing classes; a testament to the quality of both designs. In Pinellas County's Heritage Village, the McKay Creek Boat Shop honors both designs, with an early example of a home-built Windmill, as well as the *Honey*, a Snipe built by Mills for Francis Seavy in 1947. Seavy won the 1951 Nationals in the *Honey* and continued to race it for almost 50 years. The Snipe, Windmill, and Clark Mills are integral parts of sailing history on Florida's West Coast.

To read more about the legendary sailing ability of the Windmill here are some links to online information:

- "Small Boat Review: The Windmill," by Jabbo Gordon, *Southwinds*, February 2010, <https://issuu.com/southwinds/docs/southwindsfebruary2010>
- "The Windmill class," *Classic Boat*, January 2014, <http://windmillclass.myfleet.org/static/Windmill%20class%20Classic%20Boat%20Jan-2014.pdf>
- "Built to Win," *WoodenBoat* #26, 1979, <http://windmillclass.myfleet.org/static/WB%20windmill%2026.pdf>

Snipe lines.



THE RUDDER



JOHN GARDNER GRANT FUND 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

By Gregg Schneider

Our mission of Gardner Grants is to preserve, continue, and expand the achievements, vision, and goals of John Gardner by enriching our traditional small craft heritage and supporting your efforts with competitive grants where funding might be unavailable. The committee favors proposals that involve young people. Projects can be those which replicate (build) traditional small craft, hands-on youth boat building (teaching) programs, research and documentation, preservation of important small craft, and projects that enhance community participation and the use of small craft.

The John Gardner Grant proposals are reviewed and awarded throughout the year. The source of funding is the TSCA John Gardner Fund, established in 1997 by the TSCA membership and managed by the Maine Community Foundation (MCF). Funds for projects are determined annually based on a

percentage of the principal in the fund. Individual projects have ranged from about \$200 to \$2,000 and could be more depending on the proposal.

Members of the John Gardner Grant Committee are:

Roger Allen, David Cockey, Kent Lewis, Phillip Nager, Ed Neal, Gregg Schneider, Sam Shogren, and Sidney Whelan (who crossed the bar in January).

Three John Gardner Grants were awarded in 2023.

1. San Francisco Maritime National Park Association in partnership with a Downtown High School and “Get-Out-And-Learn” (GOAL) supported a youth boatbuilding program that built a Banks Dory from John Gardner’s Dory book. The grant supported materials for the project.

A core group of members of the TSCA chapter—CABBS—putting the finishing touches on a Henry Wischmeyer-designed Pram.



2. Sound School-New Haven Harbor Foundation in partnership with the Sound School, New Haven, Connecticut, supported the restoration of a 35-foot New Haven Sharpie, *Tenacious*, that was originally constructed at the school in the 1980s. The grant supported new sails for the relaunch of *Tenacious*.
3. Lowcountry Maritime School is building a Penobscot 13 with adult volunteers aimed at building skills among those volunteers to aid their youth boatbuilding program in the Charleston, South Carolina, area. The grant supports materials for the project.

In 2023 two projects were completed, and as part of a grant recipient’s responsibilities, an article suitable for publication was submitted to *The Ash Breeze*.

- “A Grand Banks Dory from John Gardner’s Dory Book” by Laura DeFelice
- “Building the Shelbourne Dory” by Brad Dimock

Both articles can be found in the 44 #3, Fall 2023 issue of *The Ash Breeze* online at the TSCA website.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Maine Community Foundation 2023 summary of the fund activity is:

Grand Banks Dory built from John Gardner’s Dory book at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.



Beginning Balance	\$110,394
Contributions	\$200
Investment Activity Gains	\$6,766
Administrative Fees	(\$956)
Gardner Grants Awarded	(\$4,500)
Ending Balance	\$111,904

The best time to submit a grant proposal for 2024 is right now. The grant committee has not received any proposals this year. With the change to a rolling grant deadline, the committee is able to respond fairly quickly.

Please include the John Gardner Grant Fund in your annual giving. Tax-deductible donations may be sent directly to the Maine Community Foundation or you can donate online at <https://tsca.net/john-gardner-fund/>. Your donation in any amount will increase its endowment and our ability to support worthy programs across the country through Gardner Grants.

Maine Community Foundation
 Attn: TSCA John Gardner Fund
 245 Main Street
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Milford Buchanan, a fourth generation Shelburne boatbuilder, is the Master Dory Builder at Shelburne’s Museums by the Sea Dory Shop.



JOHN GARDNER GRANT

In 1999, TSCA created the John Gardner Grant program to support projects for which sufficient funding would otherwise be unavailable. Eligible projects are those which research, document, preserve, and replicate traditional small craft, associated skills (including their construction and uses), and the skills of those who built and used them. Youth involvement is encouraged.

Proposals for projects ranging from \$200 to \$2,000 are invited for consideration. Grants are awarded competitively and reviewed annually by the John Gardner Memorial Fund Committee of TSCA, typically in May. The source of funding is

the John Gardner Memorial Endowment Fund. Funding availability is determined annually.

Eligible applicants include anyone who can demonstrate serious interest in, and knowledge of, traditional small craft. Affiliation with a museum or academic organization is not required. Projects must have tangible, enduring results that are published, exhibited, or otherwise made available to the interested public. **Projects must be reported in *The Ash Breeze*.**

Program details, applications, and additional information:

tscanet.net/john-gardner-fund/



"To preserve, continue, and expand the achievements, vision, and goals of John Gardner by enriching and disseminating our traditional small craft heritage."

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NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF THE COUNCIL

By Bill Rutherford

This is the time of year when we address the election of three new National Council members. Please refer to Article V of the Bylaws of the TSCA (which you'll find on TSCA.net in the "About" menu) for more detailed information on the makeup of the Council.

The Council member terms begin and end on June 30th. Three members will retire and three more are elected to replace them. Any member of the Association, in good standing, is eligible to be a Council member. You can volunteer or accept the nomination of another member.

For the election process to begin, nominations are sent to the Secretary of the TSCA. The Secretary will receive nominations via email (smallcrafter@gmail.com), and a compiled list of nominations will be published on TSCA.net and the TSCA Facebook page. Each nominee must submit a one paragraph biography to the Secretary detailing the nominee's background and interest in serving on the Council.

Nominations will close April 30th. After the nominations are closed, the slate of the nominees with their biographies will be presented to Association members as an online ballot. Voting will take place during the month of May by digital ballot on TSCA.net. To vote, you will need to click the VOTE tab and enter your name and member number as it appears on the label of your *Ash Breeze*. Your ballot will appear on screen. Select three candidates and press the VOTE button.

On May 30th the Secretary will validate the votes received. The three candidates with the greatest number of votes each will be elected. New Council members will be notified in June.

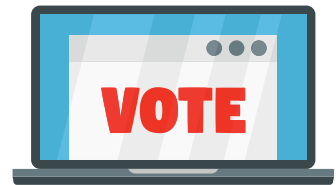
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SAILING GILLNETTER #93

By Todd Bloch

In the previous issue of *Ash Breeze*, we initiated a new series featuring small craft from the HABS/HAER/HALS Collection at the Library of Congress online collection. The series continues with the Alaska Packers Association (APA) Gillnetter #93.

In general terms, #93 is a sailing gill net boat, but is often referred to as a Bristol Bay Gillnetter due to the type's use in Bristol Bay, Alaska. It is closely related to the Columbia River Salmon Boat—Howard Chapelle in *American Small Sailing Craft* notes that both boats descended from a design

first originated by boat builder J. J. Griffin of San Francisco in 1868. Chapelle suggests that while many boat types in use on the west coast were derivatives of east coast designs (such as whitehalls), the salmon boat was a rare, uniquely West Coast design.

APA was an association of canneries that conducted salmon fishing and packing operations in Alaska. Fish were caught and canned in Alaska, then shipped to San Francisco for further distribution. The first canneries in Alaska were built in the late 1870s; the APA was created in 1893 and existed in

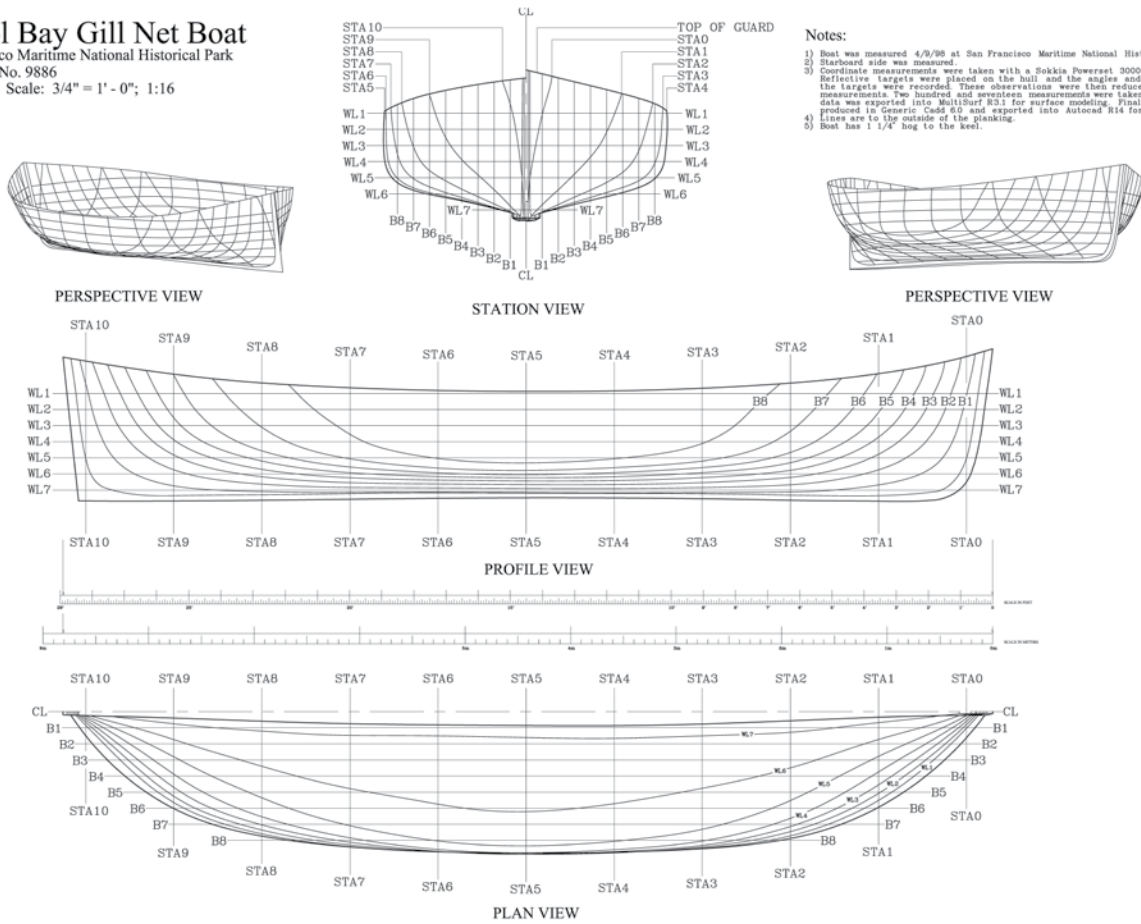
Photo showing 3/4 view from above looking from the bow aft along the port side showing the deck and interior of the boat.



Bristol Bay Gill Net Boat

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
Small Boat No. 9886

Lines Plan Scale: 3/4" = 1' - 0"; 1:16



Notes:
 1) Boat was measured 4/9/98 at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.
 2) Starboard side was measured.
 3) Coordinate measurements were taken with a Sokkia Powerset 3000 Total Station. Reflective targets were placed on the hull and the angles and distances to the targets were recorded. These observations were then reduced to coordinate measurements. Two hundred and seventeen measurements were taken. The coordinate data was exported into Millsurf R3.1 for surface modeling. Final lines were produced in Generic Cadd 6.0 and exported into Autocad R14 for final storage.
 4) Lines are to the outside of the planking.
 5) Boat has 1 1/4" hog to the keel.

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
 CA 327
 CALIFORNIA 1 - 1
 BRISTOL BAY GILLNET BOAT (BOAT NO. 9886)
 HYDE STREET PIER, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
 SAN FRANCISCO
 DRAWN BY MARK STARR, 1998
 REPRODUCED FROM
 HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

some configuration until 1982. The fishing operation utilized a fleet of these boats that deployed, not surprisingly, gill nets. Due to legal restrictions on the use of motorized vessels, these boats were able to remain sailing until the early 1950s.

A crew of two or three men would be on the water for several days tending the nets. These vessels thus had to accommodate not only the nets and catch, but also allow for sleeping and cooking. The sailing rig, a single mast sprit, was kept simple to accommodate easy and unencumbered storage. Gillnetters were also configured for rowing; #93 has two rowing stations.

Chapelle described these types of boats as “not intended to be very fast sailers. [...] The type is hardly one that would appeal to the usual pleasure sailor, but there may be individual requirements that would make it serviceable.”¹ Indeed, the Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) in Seattle features on their website the Bristol Bay Gillnetter *Admirable*, which is part of their public sailing program—it appears well suited for casual sails with novice crew. According to their website, *Admirable* was built in 1932 by well-known San Francisco boat builder George Kneass.

1. Howard I. Chapelle, *American Small Sailing Craft* (New York, London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1951), 188–189.

Gillnetter #93 was found in an old APA warehouse in Alaska in 1975, probably just over twenty years since last seeing service. It would likely (based on historic photos of other APA boats) have been identified with markings, port and starboard, on its forward hull, as “APA #93” or “NN93”—NN93 is incised on the stempost and probably refers to a specific cannery in Naknek, Alaska. (The “eye” seen on the hull in the photograph is the result of vandalism). The builder is unknown, although Chapelle notes that San Francisco boatbuilders seemed to have provided a number of gillnetters—such as *Admirable*. #93 is now in the collection of San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.

More information about the HABS/HAER/HALS Collection at the Library of Congress can be found at this link: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/>.

Citation for HABS photographs and drawing: Historic American Engineering Record, Creator, Alaska Packers’ Association, Mark Starr, Todd A. Croteau, Jack T. Becker, Aurora Tucker, and John Muir. Todd A. Croteau, photographer. *APA Sailing Gillnetter NN93, Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco, San Francisco County, CA*. San Francisco California San Francisco County, 1968. Translated by Christianson, Justinemitter, and Mcpartland, Marymitter Documentation Compiled After. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/ca2629/>.



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PINE LAKE MESSABOUT

By Pete Mathews

Sitting here watching it snow seems like the perfect time to reflect on what has become an annual small craft gathering here in the Midwest. It began on May 20, 2000. Several friends in the Pine Lake Chapter got together for a messabout at the Lansing Sailing Club on Lake Lansing, in East Lansing, Michigan (it's all the same Lansing, home of Michigan State University, the "Spartans"). The event is open to any small craft: homemade, kit built, or manufactured; rowed, paddled, sailed, or pedaled—we've had some of each. It is the only event put on by the Pine Lake (the former name of Lake Lansing) Chapter all year. For years now the West Michigan Chapter (formerly the Michigan Maritime Museum Chapter) has participated as well.

The Sailing Club is capable of launching boats by hand from a beach, a walk-in ramp, and two trailer ramps. This is handy, as the event attracts a variety of small craft. The messabout is usually held the second Saturday in September unless there is a home football game at MSU. The game days are avoided due to traffic issues in and around East Lansing.

In addition to members of the two chapters, sailing club members, MSU students, and family members frequently show up—just possibly because the Pine Lake Chapter puts on a hot dog roast for the boaters, their families, children, and just about anyone else found loitering around with an interest in small boats. It's as much a social event as it is a boating event. The Sailing Club doesn't have a "clubhouse" per se, just a small building with a deck and sanitary facilities.

The weather cooperated marvelously with sunshine, moderate temperatures, and enough wind to move small boats but not enough to discourage rowers. I brought the Faering that John Hansen and I finished earlier in the year, and I got to row this boat solo for the first time. This proved to be like landing an airplane at a public airport; lots of onlookers and evaluations of my technique. Jack Lawrence and George Alheid took it for a spin as well. Somehow George stayed dry this year. Jack brought the Chapter's Pooduck Skiff with sail rig. This is a boat the Chapter built years ago, one of our first

boat building endeavors. He has since bought the boat for his own use. Several members of Pine Lake brought their boats.

Another Pine Lake member, Walt Peebles, brought his collection of peddle power devices with boats to mount them on, so we had people peddling (no comments about peddling your you-know-what) around the lake. Walt is also known for building currachs and coracles and traditional Irish small craft with wood frames and, in this day and age, painted canvas skins rather than the older cowhides (no cows were harmed in the building of these boats). He also collects folding boats. It's always fun, sort of like Easter. Rather than a new bonnet, everyone wants to see what new or restored boats are going to show up. It was enough to bring out others on the lake to gaze at this unique assemblage of boats besides the usual squadrons of plastic bass boats, ski boats, and jet skis that normally inhabit (infest?) this urban lake. The event has sparked interest in the restoration of a couple of older boats by the Pine Lake Chapter that we hope to see at this year's (2024) messabout.

Jim Holland brought the older wooden lightning he acquired. He was looking for help rigging it from some there who were more knowledgeable about these boats. Many were built here in Michigan by Nickels and Holman (now Nickels Boat Works) in Flint Michigan and raced in various fleets. By the end of the day this boat was also sailing again.

This past year, several members arranged to have a toy boat building table for all the junior shipbuilders to have their go. Judging from the level of pounding coming from the deck, several new watercraft were launched.

The organizers invited a couple of members who are also members of the Michigan Wooden Canoe Heritage Association to demonstrate and talk about making paddles, which could apply to oars as well.

This has always been a one-day affair, so after sun, fun, and food the party loads boats and heads for home in time to get them put away in the daylight. This event will be on the schedule again for this year along with more dry land and on-the-water events.



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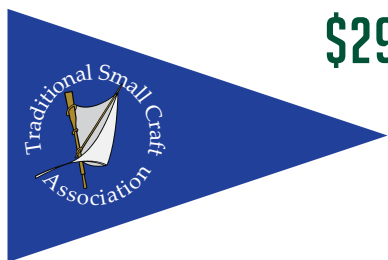


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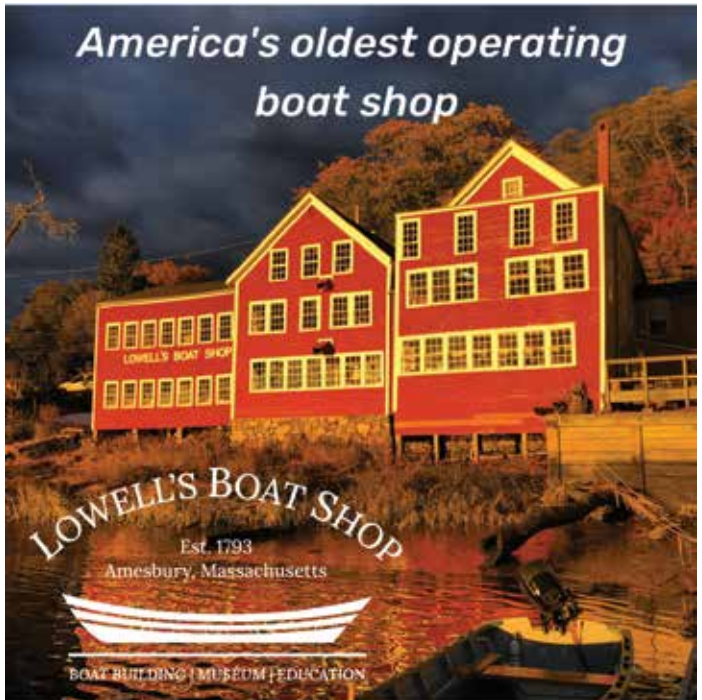
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EASTPORT TRIO

By Karen Wells

In October 2021, still in the throes of the social distancing that left us at hanging around home more than usual, our neighbor Mike approached us with a proposition. He and another neighbor, Jim, were thinking of building Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC) Eastport Prams. Would we care to join them?

Off went an order for three boat kits! Jim and Mike each ordered the add-on sailing package; my husband, John, and I built the basic pram.

The kits arrived mid-November in a single shipment, requiring us to meet up, unpack, and separate out each household's project to our respective garage or basement. One of the initial instructions is to make sure you have a wide enough door to get the finished project out. It has obviously been enough of an issue to make note of!

This kit comes pre-drilled for the "stitches," saving hours of work versus an earlier CLC kayak kit we had helped a friend with where pairs of holes needed to be drilled in just the right place. A continuing problem, though, is that only enough copper wire is provided for 3" ties; 4" or longer works better, particularly in areas where alignment is challenging. Purchasing some extra copper wire is a cheap way to make things easier.

The instructions warn you about not making the wires too tight. While a valid concern, there are the consequences of having them not tight enough. In our case, it involved having epoxy drips. We cleaned up with a lacquer-infused rag as suggested. Unfortunately, we had jubilantly done the epoxy late in the day and the epoxy drips outlasted us, leading to the warned-about "being extraordinarily difficult to sand"

Top: *Stitched hull awaiting epoxy.*
Bottom: *Skeg and skids.*

Figuring out how to reach areas to be filleted and sanded required a degree of gymnastics.



scenario when we checked things the next morning. Worse, our neighbors somehow left a gap, and with particularly bad luck, it was behind a bulkhead, leading to considerable post-construction rework to fix a leak discovered on their first outing.

For those of you not familiar with stitch and glue construction, the function of the wire (the stitch) is to hold the plywood planks in the correct position until the epoxy is set. Pulling the wires out will leave pinholes in your boat—those small intrusions that need to be filled. John and I used epoxy with a filler to fill the holes, given we were planning to paint the bottom. Neighbor Mike, who planned to varnish his boat, inside and out, took the trouble of putting a toothpick in each hole to minimize the amount of epoxy filler, making a really nice effect.

These boats use fiberglass cloth saturated with epoxy to provide strength to the hull. The suggested small foam rollers worked well for applying thin, even coats. Installing the frames came next, using epoxy fillets to secure things. We enjoyed reading the suggestion from Meg Oeller, the author of “Building Joy” in the Winter 2023 edition of *The Ash Breeze*, to use pastry bags rather than Ziplocs. Making the fillets neatly is hugely important as misplaced epoxy is devilishly difficult to remove. It is also difficult to reach some of the areas one needs to get to.

Attaching the outwales to the boat was definitely a two-person job, gently easing each piece, slippery with epoxy, to the boat. It was nice to have a combination of quick clamps to secure things quickly with c-clamps to hold things more securely. We made small wood pads so the c-clamps wouldn't dig in and leave marks. They suggest 25 clamps per side—that was not an exaggeration!

Working on certain aspects of the dinghy were difficult at times. The boat is wide enough that it's sometimes difficult to reach. Mike and Jim hung their boat overhead and worked under it at one point. Hanging it on end made it easier to work on some of the fillets.

The instructions from CLC combined the “build from scratch” version with the kit instructions in one document. In the interest of not being overly redundant for experienced builders, it sometimes left us relatively less-experienced builders with questions. I found myself reading ahead and writing out my own instructions, trying to discern small but important details that I might otherwise have missed. Our neighbors made multiple calls to the customer service number to verify details, or consulted the CLC website with helpful entries from other builders. Their “Shop Tips” and “Builders' Forum” have useful information.

Working a bit every day—sometimes long days, sometimes shorter ones when waiting for epoxy to set up—we had something that looked like a finished boat after a month's work. The next stage was far slower—almost a month of sanding. Perhaps if we had been more careful with epoxy it might have required less effort, but sanding for a good finish requires significant effort in any case.

At the end of month two, mid-January, we started the finishing work using a combination of paint and varnish. Again, this is a time-consuming project, building up multiple coats of good quality, slow-drying finish with careful sanding between coats. We used five coats of Pettit Flagship varnish on the seats, outwales, and transoms to achieve our desired finish. We used a primer coat on the hull exterior before finishing with two coats of Interlux Brightside Polyurethane Paint. Finishing tasks included installing oarlocks, adding leathers

A month almost to the day resulted in a finished-looking boat.

Then came a month of sanding followed by nearly another month to paint and finish.



to the oars, acquiring a mooring line to complement the hull color, and formulating plans for a cradle to store the boat outside during the summer. This took us to mid-February—three months into the project.

We had our boat in the water as soon as the ice left. Our neighbors had the added work of constructing the sail rig. They had to make the openings for the daggerboard truck, add the mast step and gudgeons, then assemble the additional components (mast, boom, yard, daggerboard, rudder, and tiller). Then they began assembly of their other boat. Things went considerably quicker the second time!

By mid-July, we had all boats in the water, some of them with grandkids sailing for the first time.

Both boatbuilding and boating are lots of fun. We are thankful for the TSCA and others keeping these traditions alive.

July launch party with all three boats.



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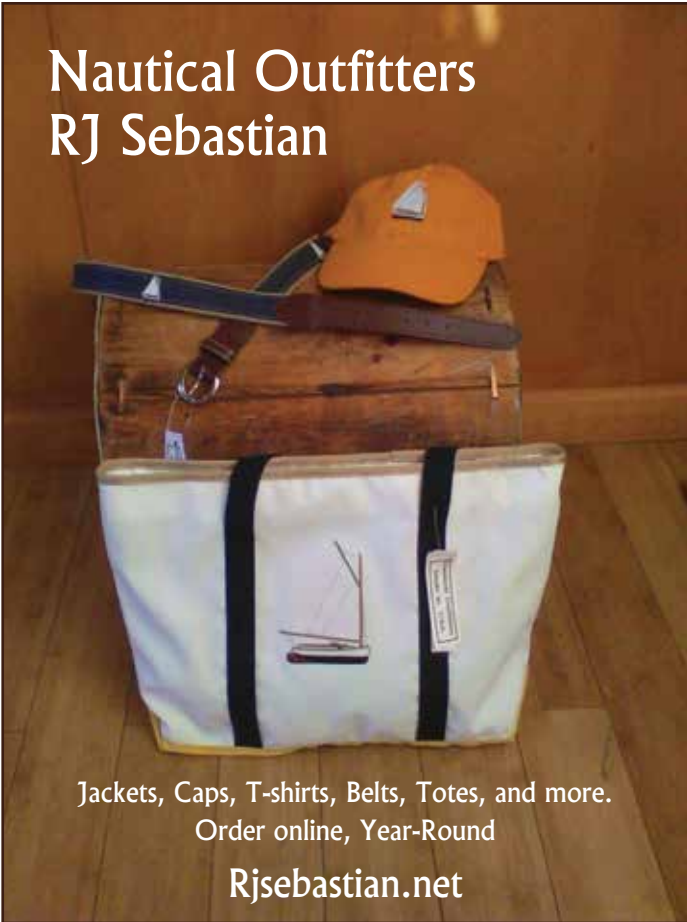


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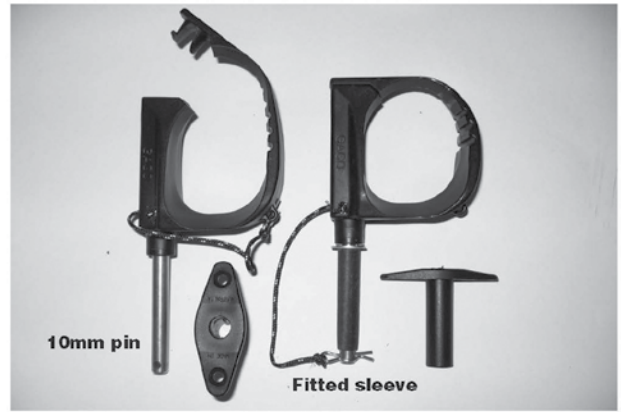
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The Ash Breeze

Summer 2024 Volume 45 Number 2

Editorial Deadline: May 1, 2024

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